

MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

13 July 2004

BOARD REPRESENTATIVES: Cynthia A. Herman, Board of Selectman Chairman & MACC BOG Chairman
Gary L. Daniels, Board of Selectman Vice-Chairman
Noreen A. O'Connell, Board of Selectman Member
Lawrence D. Pickett, Board of Selectman Member
Darlene J. Bouffard, Recording Secretary

WILTON REPRES.: Robert MacFarland, Board of Selectman
Daniel Donovan III, Board of Selectman
Stanley Schultz, MACC Board of Governors Representative

MONT VERNON

REPRESENTATIVES: Peter Savage, Board of Selectman & MACC Board of Governors
James Whipple, Board of Selectman
Michael Fimbel, Board of Selectman
Jay Wilson, Fire Department

LYNDEBOROUGH REPRES.: Dwight Sowerby, Board of Selectman

Chairman Herman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. - Discussion With Town Representatives Regarding MACC Base Status. Chairman Herman indicated the goal for tonight's meeting is to get the Milford and Wilton Boards together to get a clear understanding of the status of MACC Base. The Lyndeborough position with the MACC Board of Governors is that it is too much money to stay with MACC. If Lyndeborough could, they would stay, but if MACC service remains the same they would not continue with them. The understanding of Chairman Herman is that the issue with Mont Vernon is the expense, but also the Police Department and MDTs in the cars. Because MACC Base may not be able to serve the MDTs, it becomes an issue that Mont Vernon may need to leave MACC along with Amherst because of the MDTs that are currently running through Amherst. The Milford and Wilton Board of Selectman need to be clear where they are so that all possibilities are looked at and there is a clear picture for next year. The 2004 final budget was used to predict a new budget, using the same calculations; the current budget goes up to \$475,000 (Milford portion) and \$131,000 (Wilton portion). The target budget was determined by a lot of conversations with Nelson Taylor, MACC Director, in order to carve out certain things or go to shift changes or stagger staffing. This is a lot of money the Towns need to come up with. If Lyndeborough and Mont Vernon have to opt out, the operation may need to change or other ways to serve those towns and their needs need to be identified. The goal tonight, said Chairman Herman, is to brainstorm and see what the options are and what the various Boards are open to. James Whipple, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, asked if the numbers provided include any other services. Chairman Herman answered the numbers only include what is currently provided.

Selectman Pickett suggested finding out what would keep Mont Vernon and Lyndeborough with MACC Base. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, indicated the issue with Mont Vernon Police is the use of the MDTs in the cars - it would not make sense to pay for services to two different places. Mr. Savage asked if Mont Vernon could procure all other services from MACC Base with the exception of Police. It would be nice if MACC Base could provide the MDT service, but right now they do not. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, suggested if there would be an "a-la-carte" service offered, Temple might also be interested. Selectman Pickett asked what other services would be needed, other than Police, to be provided from MACC? Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said Amherst currently provides ambulance service, but it does not need to be dispatched out of Amherst. Selectman Pickett asked if the ambulance service is provided by Amherst, wouldn't the dispatch need to be out of Amherst? Jay Wilson, Mont Vernon Fire Department, said the only way it can work is with the 911 call to go through Amherst. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, indicated the MDTs are the only issue for Police. Because Amherst is leaving MACC Base, and Mont Vernon uses them for the MDT service, that is driving Mont Vernon to leave MACC along with Amherst. Selectman O'Connell asked if Milford has approached the ambulance service to pick up Mont Vernon calls. Would that be another way around having Police with Amherst and other services through MACC Base? Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, explained Mont Vernon's dilemma of not being able to afford to pay twice and a solution is needed that the voters will go for. Chairman Her-

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1 man asked if Mont Vernon has a target budget number for the Town to pay for services and asked if Amherst will do
2 all of the Mont Vernon dispatch. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, answered that Amherst will do all
3 of Mont Vernon's dispatching for the same amount of money being paid to MACC Base for services today. Michael
4 Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said it will cost the same as the current MACC Base cost with a guaran-
5 tee of one year at that cost.

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7 Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, indicated that right now there is no alternative for the Police
8 MDTs. Dwight Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Selectman, said that no matter what, Lyndeborough can get all
9 their services for \$15,000. The problem is the Wilton/Lyndeborough/Temple ambulance is dispatched by MACC
10 Base. The frequency they are dispatching on is owned by Milford. Robert MacFarland, Wilton Board of Selectman
11 explained that all the money that comes in for the ambulance services goes back out to the provider of the services.
12 The Town wants to avoid having two pagers for different services. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman,
13 said Amherst has been a gracious host in letting Mont Vernon use their MDTs for two years now. Chairman Herman
14 visited the Sheriff to find out some pricing structure and found out they price per call based on the average number
15 of calls. The formula was developed 10 years ago by the legislature and it has been in place ever since. Milford has
16 infrastructure, said Chairman Herman, who asked if that could be incorporated and she was told that was not feasible
17 - it would be about \$150,000 to go through County for everything. What concerns Chairman Herman about using
18 County is if everyone goes from MACC Base to County, then it caves in on itself because of all the use, then the
19 entire infrastructure would be gone. County does not seem to be a real option for Milford. County is not going out
20 of the dispatch service anytime soon. They are not out marketing to any communities but they do provide that ser-
21 vice and are planning to improve that service. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said as more
22 towns are tempted to go to County, he thinks it is subsidized by the towns and County indirectly. He can see that
23 those prices will go up especially if they upgrade their equipment. Dwight Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Se-
24 lectman, agrees that it will happen, but only so much equipment is needed and that cost can be spread out across the
25 towns so the price drops dramatically. It should not cost more than KMA which is way below what is paid to MACC
26 Base.

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28 After all the conversations and going through budgets, Chairman Herman said there are a few options, number 1
29 would be to come up with some way to provide "a-la-carte" services. The County is pricing per call - right now
30 MACC Base does not track calls by who did what (Police/Fire/Ambulance). The technology will be in place to track
31 with the new consoles. The radios transmitting the calls will be tracked and could be billed that way. Peter Savage,
32 Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, asked what the definition of "call" is - is it phone to dispatch or dispatch to radio.
33 Chairman Herman could not answer that because Milford has never needed to worry about it. This would need to be
34 worked out using averages for a budget. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, suggested using some
35 statistical analysis to figure out the numbers. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, asked if the new
36 equipment is in place at MACC Base. Chairman Herman answered that it is coming in piece meal and once it is all
37 in it will be installed. All the towns will be notified once that happens. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Se-
38 lectman, asked if the calls can be tracked once that new equipment is in place, to which Chairman Herman said it can
39 be because MACC can identify the calls. Robert MacFarland, Wilton Board of Selectman, said the \$605,000 budget
40 is based on all the towns being with MACC Base, if there is a commitment from all the towns except Amherst we
41 need to know what we are dealing with for whoever is left. The services or personnel will need to be cut somewhere.
42 Nelson Taylor, MACC Director, and Chairman Herman discussed a target budget of \$450,000 and staffing of slower
43 shifts. The equipment is purchased, and there is an agreement among Nelson Taylor, MACC Director, dispatch,
44 Department Heads and the Board, that there needs to be someone covering 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Dwight
45 Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Selectman, asked if the Department Heads would be comfortable with one person
46 covering at certain times of day. Chairman Herman said for certain times of day they would be comfortable, as long
47 as there is additional staff available a phone call away. Dwight Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Selectman, asked
48 about during breaks for the staff when there is only one person. Selectman Pickett noted that not long ago there was
49 only one person up there. Chairman Herman suggested having cross training, so that someone from another agency
50 (such as ambulance) can cover for a half hour. Why can't ambulance staff that is there during the night cover the
51 MACC Base dispatch for a break? Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, believes Amherst will be doing
52 that. The other thing is that not everyone wants to be a dispatcher, said Chairman Herman. Maybe Milford could
53 look into providing backup services with Hollis. What if the towns alternate evenings that MACC would dispatch
54 for Hollis and then conversely Hollis would dispatch for MACC - is something like that possible, asked Chairman
55 Herman. Or could County provide backup?
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James Whipple, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, noted there are a lot of areas in Mont Vernon that are not reached or are difficult to reach - there are some blind spots in town. Chairman Herman just wonders if there could be some kind of cooperative with Hollis to switch off services. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, suggested maybe dispatch could be used through night time hours and Police or County could provide dispatch during the day. That would save one shift. Chairman Herman thought that might be a possibility. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, does not want services reduced. Daniel Donovan, Wilton Board of Selectman, said that Hollis dispatches Brookline as well and they do that with only one person on duty, so picking up Milford would require them to have another person. The way the MACC Base contract is written, there are very few options, it is all or nothing, said Selectman O'Connell. MACC Base cannot accept Temple the way the contract is written; maybe the contract could be re-worded so it can accept some other towns and help lower the cost. Selectman Pickett asked if Mont Vernon uses MDTs for Police, does that reduce the call volume during the daytime. That could be the reduction of one staff person - the units could call in their own traffic stops. But Chief Douglas is not interested in the same MDTs that are being used by Amherst and Mont Vernon, said Chairman Herman. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said his police could adapt to a new system depending on cost. Dwight Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Selectman, likes the MDTs but right now the way the agreement is worded there is no way to bring in another town with partial services. How could a member be brought in with partial services, unless they were brought in under a contract for services. Robert MacFarland, Wilton Board of Selectman, said the agreement was originally based on the size of the community. The fee structure is separate from the services being provided, said Chairman Herman, but would the MACC members be willing to talk about having contracted services? There was a discussion about the fire alarm boxes in Milford and how the Fire Department handles those calls.

Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, indicated the question here is do the towns involved want to bring in any additional towns? Robert MacFarland said Wilton does not have a problem with that. There is some legitimate work that needs to be done together to get that ball rolling, said Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman. If Milford and Wilton end up being the only two towns left with MACC Base, said Chairman Herman, the towns need to get cohesive on how MACC Base needs to run. Are we talking about systemic changes in addition to what has already started changing or are we talking about service commitment? As of August 31, 2004, it will be just Milford and Wilton to work it out. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, has been talking about reworking the contract so that some towns can get partial services. There has not been a discussion yet, but maybe the cart is before the horse. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, would like (as a town) to stay with partial services if possible, but it might be more of a quick fix. Mont Vernon and Lyndeborough might lose the membership because of the lack of partial membership; the desired outcome would be if Milford and Wilton agreed they could get back into the full membership without additional funds. If the towns are leaving, the remaining towns (Milford and Wilton) will make cuts and then if the towns want to come back, that infrastructure will need to be built back up and Milford and Wilton should not have to pay for that, said Robert MacFarland, Wilton Board of Selectman. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, thought that it was a spirit of cooperation that was trying to be worked out. Where does a contract with partial services stand - are we going to get to that? Chairman Herman said that is why this meeting is happening. Selectman Pickett said it is hard to have a town be a member with a 3% budget and 3% vote - he does not see that being worthwhile. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said Milford is under the assumption that Mont Vernon has already decided to go with Amherst and that decision has not yet been made. Selectman Pickett recommended getting the Milford, Wilton and Mont Vernon Police Chiefs together to see if an MDT system can be identified together that everyone can use to cut costs and provide service to the towns.

Jay Wilson, Mont Vernon Fire Department, indicated there are two ways to solve this, first get money for Milford to run alone (5 people, 24/7 is minimum staffing) Mont Vernon has about 100 calls per year, if Lyndeborough is added in that is another 100 calls per year which is more of an impact. Another solution is to get the Police Chiefs to sit down about MDTs to see what can work for everyone. The fee structure for Hillsborough County is based on the call volume. A lot of departments have shifted to population-based fees instead of call volume. There are a lot of different fee structures out there. Chairman Herman does not want another department in Milford, she wants MACC Base to work. The pieces that different towns have a need for are secondary; the primary concern is what is actually needed for Milford and Wilton to move forward. After that, we need to figure out how we can provide services to the towns that need services but at a cost. Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, would first need to find out about MDTs. Chairman Herman asked if the costing has been done to see if Mont Vernon can afford it? Peter Savage has not run the costing but indicated Nelson Taylor could do that. Chairman Herman feels a lot of technical information needs to be taken into consideration and staffing needs to be discussed. Selectman Pickett summarized the two issues that need to be worked out: 1) Milford and Wilton get together to figure out what is needed if it's just

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1 them with MACC Base; 2) try to do what it takes to keep Mont Vernon here with MDTs. These two items can be
2 done separately, but in parallel. If it does not work out with the MDTs, we will still have the Milford and Wilton
3 piece worked out. Chairman Herman said Chief Douglas does not want to use the same system as Amherst. Dwight
4 Sowerby, Lyndeborough Board of Selectman, asked if the issue is the Cardinal software, to which Peter Savage said
5 it is not. If Dwight Sowerby or his community can help he will. He would prefer to fix the system and be able to
6 afford to stay with MACC Base. Selectman Pickett asked what Lyndeborough would like to keep with MACC (on a
7 cost for services contract, if possible). Dwight Sowerby answered just ambulance would stay with MACC.
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9 Jay Wilson, Mont Vernon Fire Department, said one thing with the Fire Departments is that they will want the dis-
10 patch to be centralized. What Amherst is doing is insane. Police wants to do their own dispatch. If Milford goes
11 with two or three towns, there will be other towns that want to be contracted out. Stanley Schultz, Wilton MACC
12 BOG representative, said when Amherst leaves MACC Base, he assumes their frequency leaves too. Mont Vernon
13 will have to go to that frequency. The other thing is Mont Vernon's fire frequencies will eventually be changed.
14 Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, said the only alternative is to split services or have MACC Base get
15 MDTs. It's got to be one or the other. Robert MacFarland, Wilton Board of Selectman, said there is not enough
16 time to get MDTs to MACC Base. Peter Savage would be happy with just a plan for that to happen. Bob MacFar-
17 land believes the Wilton Police Chief wants to go to MDTs as well. Peter Savage just needs to find out the cost of
18 the MDTs that Chief Douglas is looking into and the infrastructure requirements. What will it cost Mont Vernon to
19 put the transmitter in the two cars. Selectman Pickett took the action to get the information. Robert MacFarland
20 asked if there are funds available through the State for MDTs. Peter Savage got the Mont Vernon MDTs through
21 grant funding, but he is not sure if there is money still available. Michael Fimbel, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman,
22 indicated the expense of putting the MDTs into MACC Base would make it much more attractive for Mont Vernon
23 to come back to MACC Base. If the budget for MACC Base for Mont Vernon went up to \$65,000, Peter Savage
24 said that amount probably could not be sold to the voters.
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26 It was agreed that 3 Board of Selectman representatives (Milford Selectman Pickett, Wilton Selectman MacFarland
27 and Mont Vernon Selectman Savage), the three Police Chiefs of those communities and Nelson Taylor, MACC Base
28 Director, would meet to discuss these issues. Robert MacFarland indicated he would like any community who will
29 still be with MACC Base on August 31 to attend the meeting. The MACC Base Board of Governors meets next
30 Wednesday, July 21, 2004, at 7:30 p.m. so the date of Tuesday, July 20 was chosen to have this committee meet.
31 The meeting will be held at MACC Base at 7 p.m. Each Board of Selectman member is responsible to invite that
32 community Police Chief to the meeting.
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34 Peter Savage, Mont Vernon Board of Selectman, noted that Mont Vernon does not want to abandon MACC Base,
35 but it is a safety issue for the Police Chief and they need the MDTs. A major concern with Chairman Herman is for
36 everyone to be on the same page. Peter Savage suggested the Board of Selectman members be invited to the next
37 MACC Base Board of Governors meeting to hammer out some language. As the MACC Base BOG Chairman, Cyn-
38 thia Herman will send out invitations to all town Board of Selectman. An agenda will be included and invitations
39 will be sent to all towns currently in MACC Base.
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41 There being no further business to come before this Meeting, the Board adjourned at 7:30 p.m.
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46 Chairman
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50 Vice Chairman
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